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**MAYOR EMANUEL AND ALDERMAN O'SHEA BREAK GROUND ON COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS
ACROSS THE SOUTH WEST SIDE**

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and 19th Ward Alderman Matt O'Shea today joined Chicago Park District, Chicago Public Schools and the Public Building Commission on the south west side to break ground on the Beverly Park Playground, and annexes at Esmond Elementary School and Mt. Greenwood Elementary School.

"This series of investments on the south west side will create the state-of-the-art facilities and extra space necessary to support the future of our children and the future of our city," said Mayor Emanuel. "Together with Alderman O'Shea, we are proud to make smart, critical investments that help both students and residents to strengthen the social fabric of this community."

"Ongoing investments in our parks and our schools are a sign of what's to come in Beverly, Morgan Park and Mt. Greenwood," said Alderman Matt O'Shea, 19th Ward. "These projects will not only benefit our children, they will become community staples that benefit our residents for generations to come."

The Beverly Park Playground will undergo significant renovations. Once construction is complete, the playground will house new play equipment for children ages 2 - 12, including a swing set, net climbers and a spinning play feature. Improvements include new artificial turf surfacing, a new asphalt ramp leading into the playground, new park signage and modifications to the existing timber walls. The adjacent spray pool on the northwest corner of the park will remain.

"Neighborhood playgrounds are valuable resources that strengthen our communities and enrich the lives of every individual that visits our parks," said Chicago Park District Superintendent & CEO Michael P. Kelly. "Today, we are not only investing in these resources, but also in our future generations."

The state-of-the-art improvements made to the playground will align with ADA accessibility guidelines. The project is expected to be complete by September 2018.

Two annexes at Esmond Elementary School and Mt. Greenwood Elementary School will be built in the Morgan Park and Mount Greenwood neighborhoods. Both annexes are expected to be complete by January 2019.

“The annexes at Esmond and Mount Greenwood Elementary will create extra space and state-of-the-art learning facilities necessary for our students to learn, grow, and thrive,” said CPS CEO Dr. Janice K. Jackson. “These investments will provide engaging learning opportunities for generations to come.”

The two-story 20,000 square foot annex at Esmond Elementary School in Morgan Park will replace a deteriorating stand-alone modular building. The annex will include a classroom, computer lab, science lab, art room with storage, library, dining room, hybrid kitchen and dining area, administrative office, bathrooms, building storage, an elevator and building support space. The project will also include a renovated parking lot, load area, refuse enclosure, storm water management infrastructure, a new outdoor playground, community garden, and a turf field. Renovations to the existing building include a new roof and repairs to the exterior envelope.

The two-story 27,000 square foot annex at Mt. Greenwood Elementary School in Mount Greenwood will include thirteen standard classrooms, a science lab, offices, storage and utility rooms, bathrooms and an elevator. Work within the school building will include converting two existing classrooms for expanded lunchroom capacity. The project will also include a new outdoor playground, a new parking lot and storm water management infrastructure.

“Nothing gives me greater joy to know that we are partnering with CPS to develop new annexes that will provide students with the resources necessary for a 21st century education,” said Carina E. Sanchez, Executive Director of the Public Building Commission of Chicago. “The new annexes support the Mayor’s vision of providing high quality public education for every child, in every neighborhood, to ensure that they all have access to an education that will aid in their success - whether it is in their academic, professional, or civic life.”

These investments build on several upcoming and completed projects on the south west side since 2011. Opened in 2015, the 64,000 square foot Morgan Park Sports Center features a state of the art indoor ice rink facility and a world-class gymnastics center with concession areas, meeting and party rooms, viewing areas, offices, restrooms and team locker rooms. Mt. Greenwood Park last year was updated with a new walking path and outdoor exercise equipment. Upcoming projects include the addition of a new water feature at Graver Park.

Mayor Emanuel and CPS have addressed overcrowding at over 35 local schools in recent years, including Skinner West, Zapata, Dore, Dawes, South Loop, Prussing, Addams, Little Village, Bridge, Onahan, Ebinger, Pasteur, Canty, Byrne, Edwards, Dore, Garvey, Hale, Peck, Stevenson, Dirksen, Sauganash, and many more. The Mayor remains committed to working with communities to find innovative ways to relieve overcrowding.

Under Mayor Emanuel’s leadership, there have been investments in neighborhoods across the city including \$3.2 billion in school infrastructure and \$1 billion in parks since 2011. Investments with CPS has included new schools and annexes, playgrounds and air conditioning, improvements and access to technology, new computers and expanded bandwidth, expanded academic programs and core facilities investments.

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